

Approved

May 14, 2014
The Compass School Council
The Compass School
537 Old North Road
Kingston, RI

Minutes

Call to order: Elizabeth Allen, Council President, calls the meeting to order at 6:05 pm

Roll Call of Members Present: Elizabeth Allen (EA), Cyrus Beasley (CB), Dina Mandeville (DM), Heidi Vasquez (HV) Hilary Downes-Fortune (HD) and Marisa Gallagher(MG)

Absent: Charlie Weygand (CW), Michelle Clifford (MC) and Rick Rhodes (RR) Michael Obel-Omia, Interim Director

Approval of minutes

DM motions to approve the April 9, 2014 minutes. EA seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

DM motions to approve the April 14, 2014 special session minutes and the April 14, 2014 special executive session minutes.

HV seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Committee Reports (Consent Agenda)

DM motions to accept the consent agenda.

CB seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Development/Treasurers

- April Bank statements look to be in order.
- Updated 3 year budget forecast with new proposed busing contract.
- Researched other opportunities for benefits and benefit consultants.

Site Maintenance

- Greenhouse heater permitted, installed and functioning.

Approved

- Met with building inspectors about inspections for open permits. Decided to wait for the end of the school year to minimize disruption.
- Thank you to Dave Skaggs for the work to the picnic tables.

Learning

Learning Committee Report May 2014

We met on April 16, 2014

Attended: Hilary Downes Fortune, Heidi Vazquez, Joe Militello, Nikki Katsetos, Kari Militello, Alex Bejan, Michael Obel-Omia

Unable to attend: Amy Crane, Haryln Smile Benetti

The committee read several researched based articles on effective middle school models and learning experiences prior to the meeting. We shared out and recorded key points from the articles. Articles included:

- Expeditionary Learning
- Formative instruction and assessment
- Project based learning
- Environmental education

Next, we outlined what we would need to follow these models and a list of questions to think about of how expeditionary learning would work at Compass. We also made a list of strengths in our current program that we could expand upon with more resources, space, and a more focused program unique to middle school and Compass.

At the next meeting, we will look at research specifically about 5th and 6th grade learning, review survey for Compass alumni, and start to draft a vision for the future of our middle school.

Next meeting Wednesday May 21st at 3:30 in the multipurpose room

Requests from community for agenda items and comments

Director's Report

"If you so choose, even the unexpected setbacks can bring new and positive possibilities. If you so choose, you can find value and fulfillment in every circumstance." Ralph Marston

The weather report for the School's seminal event, Eco-Fair, isn't promising: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a dear friend during the inclement snow season from December through February, predicts that there is a 70% chance of rain on that day. Undeterred, each Step is preparing for the Eco-Fair, hopeful that the Project-Shares will be as successful as the previous ones this year have been. Drew and several parents have been working hard to pull this event together.

Today, as I write pen this note, the School is experiencing the second consecutive glorious day, so several Steps are outside taking advantage of the good weather preparing for Eco-Fair and gardening. Recently, while working with Cyrus, I was able to assist in putting propane into the greenhouse. It is something that has been requested for years, and Cyrus and my working together completed the task late last month. Also, the David Skaggs, who grew up in the Farmhouse, repaired several of the School's damaged picnic benches just in time for Eco-Fair, and assisted me in repairing the fence as well. He will return this week to mow the "back 40," and the landscaping company has done a campus-wide clean-up: The Compass School, in spite of the weather predictions, will be prepared for the unexpected (and unwelcomed) weather.

Collaborating with Kingston Hill Academy and the Rhode Island League of Charter Schools, I was able to negotiate a fair price for the new transportation contract, which should save the School considerable money. In addition, collaborating with the Faculty and Kingston Hill Academy, I have been able to devise a calendar that will allow the administration going forward not only to fulfill its responsibility to the State and Federal requirements—180 days of school—but also focus the faculty on professional development initiatives. One of them, teacher evaluation, I have taken seriously, inviting in Alyson Beatty, a contractor working for RIDE, to observe classes, instruct the faculty, and work individually with Cathy Fusco and me. She has been exceptionally helpful in improving instruction in this School.

The students have been dental screened by a dentist that Ms. Diane brought in, and Mark Clifford has begun the popular Flag Football program, in spite of the sometimes unexpected and inclement weather—the first week was cancelled due to a terrible storm, but the activity is up and running. As you know, the School collaborated with a North Kingston student for a running club, and one of the students participated in a road race, as a collaboration of this activity. The community is adjusting to the locked doors fairly well.

Finally, the students have not only been preparing for Eco-Fair, but also taking field trips to Alton Jones—the Investigators—and standardized testing, NECAPS for science for 4th and 8th grades, PARCC literacy for seventh grade students. They have gone off with nary a hitch, as I am paying close attention to test security, as you would expect. So, we all seek to find value and fulfillment in these unique circumstances in which we find ourselves. Most important, we are focusing energy and attention on educating, inspiring, and uplifting the students in our charge.

Approved

Respectfully submitted,

Michael C. Obel-Omia

Interim Executive Director

Steve Panikoff addressed council about possibilities for 2014-15 Director Evaluation.

- 43 years in education – 5 years as director of Kingston Hill Academy in RI
- Trained in RIDE evaluation
- Currently is working on evaluations at KHA and is evaluating the director.

Council Elections – Discussed timeline and approve ballot

- EA sent out an e-mail to parents/families
- Teachers should also recruit among parent

CB motions to accept the ballot.

MG seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Calendar - Approve 2014-15 calendar.

DM motions to pass the amended calendar as discussed (move conference day from 4/3/14 to 4/10/14).

MG seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Transportation - Approve bus contract for 2014-15

DM motions to endorse The Compass School joining with KHA for a transportation contract with Ocean State Transportation.

HV seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Budget – Approve draft 2014-15 budget.

Council discussed the draft budget. The budget was not approved at this time.

DM motions to approve the current salary scale.

EA seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Approved

Appointment of Permanent Director –

HV motions to appoint Don Holder as the Director of The Compass School, to begin 7/1/2014.
CB seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Requests from community for agenda items and comments

Executive session per RIGL 42-46-5(a)(3) matters of school security (feedback on door situation) has been tabled.

HF motions to approve the April 9, 2014 executive session minutes as amended.

DM seconds.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

Announcements

8:03 PM EA Adjourns the meeting